

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A setting tool, comprising a housing (11); a piston guide (13) displaceably arranged in the housing (11); a setting piston (15) displaceable in a hollow chamber (14) of the piston guide (13) under action of a propellant from an initial position thereof to an end position thereof; a device (20) for braking displacement of the setting piston (15) in the end position thereof at an end of a setting process; and a wear recognition device (30) associated with the setting piston braking device (20) for automatically blocking a setting process dependent on a wear condition of the setting piston braking device.

2. A setting tool according to t claim 1, wherein the wear recognition device (30) comprises wear detection means (32) for detecting wear of the setting piston braking device (20), and a locking element (31) for blocking a setting process in case of excessive wear of the braking device.

3. A setting tool according to claim 2, wherein the wear detection means (32) has several wear detection elements, with each wear detection element cooperating with a separate locking element.

4. A setting tool according to claim 2, wherein the piston guide (13) is displaceable relative to the housing (11) between an operational position in which a setting process can take place, and an initial position corresponding to an initial position of the setting tool (10), and wherein the locking element (31) is displaced by wear detection means (32), at a predetermined amount of wear of the braking device (20) from a release position (38) thereof into a blocking position (35) thereof in which the locking element (31) prevents displacement of the piston guide (13) from the initial position thereof to the operational position thereof.

5. A setting tool according to claim 1, wherein the wear recognition device (30) forms an integral component of the braking device (20).

6. A setting tool according to claim 2, wherein the braking device (20) has a damping element (21) and a braking member (22) for effecting a braking deceleration of the setting piston (15).

7. A setting tool according to claim 6, wherein the wear detection means (32) is arranged on the braking element (22), and wherein the locking element (31) has an adjusting section (37) operationally associated with the wear detection means (32).

8. A setting tool according to claim 2, further comprising spring means (36) for biasing the locking element (31) to its blocking position (35) in which it blocks the setting process.

9. A setting tool according to claim 2, wherein the locking element (31) blocks, in a blocking position (35) thereof displacement of the setting piston guide (13) relative to the housing (11).

10. A setting tool according to claim 4, wherein the wear detection means (32) has an inclined surface (34) that cooperates with an inclined surface (33) of an adjusting section (37) of the locking

element (31) for displacing the locking element (31) in radial direction upon displacement of the wear detection means in an axial direction.